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A pedal through the forest

A young rider pedals through the woods on Tuesday, Aug. 11 in Minden. Late summer biking provides ideal conditions for riders, who get to encounter less mosquitoes compared to the spring. /DARREN LUM Staff

Minden Pride goes online amid pandemic

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The fifth annual Minden Pride festival will proceed amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, with many events taking place

virtually.

Minden Pride will run Aug. 24 through 30, with festivities kicked off by a raising of the rainbow flag at the Minden Hills municipal office on Monday, Aug. 24. While residents are normally invited to congregate in the parking lot for this event, at press time, the plan was to broadcast the flag-raising on

the internet, through a video link that will be shared at a later date. The flag raising will take place at 11 a.m.

On the evening of Aug. 24, there will be a free showing of films at Abbey Gardens' Little Pit Drive-In.

"Watch the award-winning feature film *Pariah* and short, *Trevor*, both dealing with

the challenges of coming out, and identifying as lesbian and gay," reads a release from organizers. In addition, there will be two surprise videos.

Gates open at 7 p.m., with the films shown at dusk. There is a 30-car limit, so those wishing to attend are asked to pre-register at

see PRE-REGISTRATION page 2



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Pre-registration required for Pride events

from page 1

abbeygardens.ca/littlepitdrivein

Pizza, beer and treats will be available by advanced order, and there will be prizes for the best-decorated vehicle. The rain date for the show is Aug. 25.

Tuesday, Aug. 25 will see the launch of *Building Business in our Community*, a video produced by Sticks and Stones Media and focusing on the community of Minden Pride. The video will be broadcast at 7 p.m., followed by a discussion on online teleconferencing platform Zoom, and those interested are asked to pre-register at curtaintalk@mindenpride.ca.

The launch of video *Our Community Speaks Out*, also produced by Sticks and Stones, is set to launch at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 26, with those interested again asked to pre-register at curtaintalk@mindenpride.ca.

A virtual Minden Pride trivia night will take place from 8 to 9:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 27. Hosted by Jack Brezina and Sean Pennylegion, the evening will be a test of LGBTQ+2 trivia and will take place via Zoom. A fun team name and email address will be required for each team, and those interested in playing are asked to register by noon on Aug. 27 by emailing trivianight@mindenpride.ca.

On Friday, Aug. 28, you're invited to put on your dancing shoes and shake your booty online at the Completely Outrageous Virtually Incredible Dance Party, which will run from 8 to 10 p.m. Dancers are asked to register at COVIDparty@mindenpride.ca. There will be door prizes for the best costumes.

On Saturday, Aug. 29, Mindenites are invited to show their pride by wearing their pride colours around town, at the farmers' market, or floating down the Gull River. Share your photos on social media by tagging Minden Pride, which is active on Instagram, Facebook and Tik Tok.

Finally, this year's Minden Pride will wrap up with a multi-faith service led by Rev. Max Ward of the Highland Hills United Church on Sunday, Aug. 30. That ceremony will take place at 1 p.m., and those interested are asked to pre-register at multifaith@mindenpride.ca.



The Minden Pride Players, directed by Daniel Manley, treated the crowd to a number of tunes, including some by Queen and the Village People, during the flag-raising ceremony for the 2019 Minden Pride festival. /CHAD INGRAM Staff

AH collecting comments on short-term rentals

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The Township of Algonquin Highlands is currently accepting comments on potential regulations for short-term rentals in the municipality from residents, with the deadline for those submissions Aug. 31.

As previously reported, during a July meeting, Algonquin Highlands council had a discussion where they agreed they would explore the creation of regulatory framework for short-term rentals within the township. Some municipalities have such policies in place, whereby owners of short-term rentals must register with the municipality, pay a licensing fee and are subject to certain rules, with a demerit point system in place in some instances.

"Submissions should outline pros, cons, impacts or benefits of short-term rentals from a planning and regulatory perspective," reads a release from the township, adding this could

include points such as increased accommodation options for visitors; additional income for property owners; benefits to the tourism sector; environmental issues, including lake health; parking; noise; building code and safety issues; land-fill use, etc.

"While examples in support or opposition [may] be included in any submission, complaints regarding specific incidents with existing rental properties that require action should be directed to the bylaw department," the release reads. It also specifies that submissions will be accepted from Algonquin Highlands residents only, and that all submissions require a name and address to be attached to them. Submissions will be made available for review by council.

Residents wishing to make a submission are asked to email them to the township's planner at STR@algonquinhighlands.ca by Aug. 31.

Residents are also encouraged to read staff reports regarding short-term rentals, which can be found on the township's website at <https://www.algonquinhighlands.ca/residents/shorttermrentals.php>

MH reopens some facilities

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The Township of Minden Hills is reopening some of its facilities as the township has entered Stage 3 of the provincial government's COVID-19 recovery process.

At the township's administrative office on Milne Street, some services will be available by appointment, and residents are asked to call ahead with inquiries.

For the time being, however, residents are encouraged to continue to access services remotely as much as possible. "Most municipal services have continued to be available through the pandemic, and have been offered online and by

phone," reads a release from the township. "To support physical distancing, residents and customers are encouraged to continue to access Township services online at mindenhills.ca and by phone at 705-286-1260 as much as possible."

As of Tuesday, Aug. 4, the Agnes Jamieson Gallery at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre had been reopened to the public, with operating hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Bowron House, part of the Minden Hills Museum, has also been reopened to the public, while the rest of the historic buildings that constitute the museum remain accessible through virtual tour only at this time. For inquiries regarding the cultural centre, email gallery@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3154.

Minden Hills council recently passed a policy requiring that all members of the public wear a face mask while inside municipal facilities, and that all staff members must wear a face mask when interacting with members of the public.

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Everyone is welcome to attend this free event!

**Thursday August 13, 2020, 7pm
Via Zoom**

Please Register in advance for this meeting:
www.environmenthaliburton.org

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

For more information contact: Terry Moore, tmoores7031@gmail.com, 705-306-9254

Back-to-school decision different for each family

Parents weighing options over whether to send their kids to school in September

by **SUE TIFFIN**
Times Staff

Aarica Hurl feels anxious, scared, and says she has “mom guilt for sure.”

Her four-year-old already had her hairstyle and outfit picked out for her first day of school, and Hurl said, “I feel like I took away that sparkle a little,” after making the decision that both her daughter, who is starting junior kindergarten and 11-year-old son, who becomes a Grade 6 student at Archie Stouffer Elementary School this year, will stay home from school during the time of global pandemic.

Hurl is a parent in one of hundreds of families in Haliburton County deciding whether their kids will attend school in-person, enroll in school for an at-home learning program, or pursue another private option to reduce the risks of spreading COVID-19.

On July 30, the Ford government announced their much-anticipated return-to-school plan, which called for elementary schools to reopen province-wide with in-class instruction five days a week, and secondary schools with lower risk to reopen with a normal daily schedule. Students from Grade 4 to 12 and school staff are required to wear masks, while masks for students in younger grades are optional. Parents can choose between their children attending school in-person, or remote learning.

It’s a decision that has parents feeling stressed and reaching out to their social media networks to ask, “what are your plans, what are you doing about school?” For Hurl, like many others, the emotions that come along with making the decision – or not yet deciding – are intense.

“Worried if I’m doing the right thing, sad because this year I won’t have a school photo of him or her and she will miss all the fun junior kindergarten milestones – going to class for the first time, her first day of school photo at the school, making new friends.”

Hurl is able to be with her kids during the day, because she is at home from work due to being immuno-compromised.

“We have been spending lots of time going back and forth on the choices we have,” she said.

Hurl said in-person school poses a risk to her own health by her kids being part of a bigger social bubble than what is currently recommended by the government and public health units, and her family also had to consider how that could impact the people her husband works with – some considered



Landon, who is going into Grade 6 at ASES and Talia Hurl, who would be starting JK in September are opting for home school instead this year, to help keep their family’s social bubble small. /Submitted photo

to be vulnerable – at a long-term care facility. Additionally, Hurl’s son is on the autism spectrum, and does not like physical contact including that caused by a mask.

“For all of these reasons, we have decided to keep them home with us,” said Hurl, who has her early childhood education diploma and is prepared to teach her daughter as she has been, but hopes the school board will continue to supply

her son with the tools and technology he needs for remote learning.

“These are questions that most of us have and need answered before choices can and should be made,” said Hurl.

While school traditionally begins in September, Michelle Moore is waiting until after the Christmas break to decide whether or not her daughter will attend Grade 8 in person this year.

“I look at it this way, I am not willing to play Russian roulette with my daughter’s health,” said Moore.

Registration information was sent home to families Aug. 7 by the TLDSB for parents to share their intent for the school year with the board so that schools can better plan for the year knowing how many students will be registered. Re-registration is for all students, including those newly registered, and must be received by Aug. 13. Students who are not re-registered for September will be assumed to be attending at school.

“We understand that it is an immensely challenging decision to take when not all the information is known,” reads a post on the ASES Facebook page. “There are no wrong decisions in this case, just the best decisions for your family at this time.”

Those decisions look different based on a multitude of complex scenarios.

“The feeling I am getting from some of the parents I have been talking to, they have a mixed bag,” said Moore.

Her daughter enjoyed learning at home in spring, when schools were closed to help flatten the curve during the pandemic and allow the health-care system time to prepare for a possible influx of patients. In June, Sierra achieved A’s on her report card, and brought up two of her marks, noting she appreciated the chance to learn independently without distractions from other students.

Moore is joining alongside three other moms, with a total of eight kids, to look at having a tutor teach the kids in groups according to grade so the students keep up with the French immersion program they would typically be enrolled in at J.Douglas Hodgson Elementary School.

“The rest of the studies they can continue like they had for the three months there was no school,” said Moore. “I am not comfortable sending her back. Her class has 16 Grade 8 [students]...sorry, the classrooms are not big enough to keep everyone six feet apart. Now Ford said they are going to hire 500 more nurses for the school. There are over 1,000 schools just in Toronto alone. I do not see one going into our little

see **TOUGH** page 4

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COUNCIL MEETINGS

As a result of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, all Council and Committee of the Whole meetings will be conducted virtually via web conference; and Closed Session meetings via teleconference, until further notice. Meetings are held virtually, starting at 9:00 AM in the Minden Council office, 7 Milne Street.

The schedule of upcoming meetings are:

August 27 – Regular Council Meeting

Please note Council Meetings are reduced to one meeting a month in July, August and December.

During this unprecedented time, the health and safety of our community is of paramount importance. Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link available on the township website at www.minden hills.ca/council/ or by using the direct link provided in the notice. We encourage those wishing to view the meeting to also download the agenda, as it will not be displayed during the streaming process. Meeting agendas can be downloaded by visiting our website at www.minden hills.ca/council/.

Please note the live-stream link provided for each meeting will only be activated while Council is in session.

CAMPING FUEL CANISTERS

Please bring empty camping fuel canisters to a hazardous waste event.
Do not put camping fuel canisters in the Blue Box.

DISPOSABLE MASKS AND GLOVES

Please ensure you deposit your used disposable masks and gloves in the garbage. These are not recyclable.

RE-OPENING PLANS

The Township of Minden Hills is sharing preliminary re-opening plans for select municipal facilities as it prepares to move into Stage 3 of the Province’s COVID-19 recovery framework.

Most municipal services have continued to be available through the pandemic, and have been offered online and by phone. To support physical distancing, residents and customers are encouraged to continue to access Township services online at mindenhills.ca and by phone at 705-286-1260 as much as possible.

For the health and well-being of residents, customers, and staff, facilities will be operating under modified conditions based on the specific situation at each site. Many Township services will be available by appointment only. Details on modified conditions for Township facilities are available by calling 705-286-1260.

Administration Building – 7 Milne Street

To support physical distancing, residents and customers will be encouraged to continue to access Township services online at mindenhills.ca and by phone at 705-286-1260 as much as possible. Moving into Stage 3 of the Province’s COVID-19 recovery framework some Township services will now be available by appointment. For inquiries or to book an appointment please call:

Building/Bylaw/Planning – 705-286-1260 ext. 209

Finance and Tax Department – 705-286-1260

Clerks Department – 705-286-1260 ext. 212

Agnes Jamieson Gallery & Minden Hills Cultural Centre

Starting Tuesday, August 4 the Agnes Jamieson Gallery and Minden Hills Cultural Centre at 176 Bobcaygeon Road will be open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Bowron House will be open to the public while the remaining Museum buildings will be accessible through a virtual tour. For Minden Hills Cultural Centre inquiries, please email gallery@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3154.

S.G. Nesbitt Arena and Community Centre

The S.G. Nesbitt Arena and Community Centre at 55 Parkside Street will remain closed to the public until further notice while construction upgrades are being completed. For S.G. Nesbitt Arena and Minden Hills Community Centre inquiries, please call 705-286-1936.

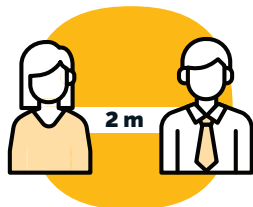
Public Works Department

The Public Works Department office at 11445 Highway 35 will remain closed to the public at this time. The Public Works Department can be reached at 705-286-3144.

Updates and information

All dates and details mentioned in this release are subject to change. Updates will be posted to the Township website (mindenhills.ca/covid-19-information), Facebook page (facebook.com/Township.Minden.Hills) and Twitter account (twitter.com/twpminden hills). Questions about the Township’s re-opening plans can be directed to admin@mindenhills.ca or 705-286-1260.

As more businesses and services reopen, we must all continue our efforts to protect each other.



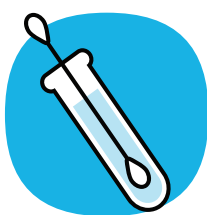
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Tough choices

from page 3

area up here – there are four schools just in Haliburton alone.”

Moore said she was concerned with how much time could be spent in the classroom on teaching with added safety concerns and hygiene requirements in place.

“The teachers and the educational assistants are going to be too busy trying to keep the kids apart, washing their hands, bathroom breaks, etc. Is there going to be someone in the bathrooms every day for six hours a day cleaning?”

Moore said she was surprised the government didn’t opt for a different model, such as a hybrid model or one like Moore’s idea in which students are separated into two groups and physically in-class part of the week with Wednesdays off, which she said would give custodians time to clean, teachers time to plan, and would allow for smaller class sizes to maintain social distancing.

“Yes, it’s not ideal, however this isn’t going to last forever,” she said.

“It’s so layered,” said Jane Isbister, but said it was a quick decision for her and Karen Pettinella to enroll their son Rowan in school. “Right now the provincial risk is low and we have some experience of testing and tracking and isolating under our belts. So that’s encouraging.”

“And although Rowan is very complicated he can’t and doesn’t put his hands in his mouth, so although he has high risk factors if he gets COVID-19, he might actually be lower risk for contracting it. He is also in a PALS class with a population of 12 to 15 including teacher and EAs, so that’s also encouraging.”

Isbister said it isn’t sustainable “physically, emotionally or financially” to keep Rowan home while she tries to work full-time and care for other kids in the house, too, until the pandemic is one day over or through what she thinks will be rotating lock downs over time.

“So for his social engagement and development I also believe the risk benefit analysis, for us, includes going to school when able.”

Busing is on Tracy Jordan’s mind. Her daughter is 15 and attends the Adult and Alternate Education Centre in Haliburton.

“I’m not as concerned about sending her back to a school – there aren’t as many kids that attend there – as I am about sending her on the bus,” said Jordan. “I think as a county we are currently fairly safe, cases have remained low. Sending kids back to school I believe will have a greater impact on those numbers, especially in the elementary schools.”

In Haliburton County, numbers of confirmed COVID-19 cases have remained low among residents – with 15 cases being reported by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, and at press time, three being unresolved. In Ontario, fewer than 100 new COVID-19 cases were reported over each of seven days last week, with about 40,000 total reported cases this year, about 90 per cent of those listed as recovered.

This spring, Jordan said, AETC

students learned over the phone and worked out of booklets, or on specialized projects to suit students’ needs and interests.

“This past spring was pretty relaxed for us, as we just spent more time working on her mental health and keeping her busy with fun projects, then transitioned into English and history,” she said, noting her daughter is on the same page about not attending class in person just yet.

“For me, the decision hasn’t been that difficult, safety first,” she said. “She has lots of time to finish her education if she falls behind.”

Jordan said she thought the government’s return to school plans “are full of holes,” and said it was important for people to make their own decisions based on their individual needs, and “go with your gut as a parent.”

“I would feel more confident sending her back to school if there was a vaccine, and yes, if the holes – i.e. elementary schools had much smaller class sizes, and social distancing was able to be reached – but I think even at that, it’s going to be very difficult to stop the spread within any type of school setting, so yeah, vaccine would make me comfortable.”

Nicky Robichaud said her children won’t be getting the vaccine – one of her kids is allergic to many antibiotics and has had negative reactions to immunizations in the past.

She said she made up her mind months ago that her kids, aged four, six and seven, would not be returning to school this year. Though it’s sad to her that one of her children was not able to experience the traditional “clap-out” ceremony as he moved from Stuart Baker to JDHES, and that her JK student won’t be able to experience traditional school entry at all, because one of her children has multiple medical conditions, she said her family “cannot risk it.”

Robichaud also has a baby at home, and said she plans to homeschool her three school-aged children though it will be challenging. “[It’s] a learning curve, due to I have two with learning disabilities and require special equipment, computers, that we have from the school, but I also had to get home internet which is costing me \$150 a month for them to be able to [participate in] school,” she said.

The home learning program was stressful for Robichaud she said, and continues to be so as she has struggled in school in the past, but said she and her husband are feeling confident in their decision. “I think the government is nuts for re-opening, especially when we don’t have the room to split classrooms in half,” she said. “Where are those other half of students going to go, how are you going to keep on top of the cleaning and separation?”

Robichaud said she felt the community has been supportive of each person’s decision, and is working together.

Caroline Kooistra said her kids are feeling great about going back to school, and joked that they are “looking forward to going, for once.”

She has a 12-year-old student attending JDHES, and a 15-year-old student in Haliburton Highlands Secondary

see page 5

Situation stressful for parents

from page 4

School. Working full-time during the spring while also trying to keep up with the kids' schooling was exhausting for Kooistra, who said she requires some assistance for her son's learning needs, and doesn't have the means to pay privately. The family has been enjoying their summer, her older son working at Subway and the kids being self-sufficient while she works, spending time at the skate park or in the lake at their house.

Kooistra said she is not concerned about the return to school.

"I believe it's time," she said. "They need routine and we manage daily with the new norm now, so the next step is school. I welcome it [and] won't put fear into my kids so they manage well ... I feel 100 per cent confident. I believe that this is going to be around for some time and maybe just the first of many pandemics to come – who knows – and their education is also important."

Kooistra said the conversations she sees in some forums can be polarizing.

"I just have a different point of view on the matter but you can't argue it, there's no right or wrong as far as I'm concerned," she said.

Kooistra said those who make the choice to send their kids to school shouldn't be seen as being reckless, echoing a call on social media for parents to support each other through decisions.

"...it's an individual choice. Please don't judge."

Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents said it's certainly difficult for parents, or anyone, to know what's best during a time of pandemic, when fear and anxiety can be heightened.

"Parents in the end are the ones that know their children best," she said. "They are also the ones that know themselves

best. Families have to make the best choice they can with the information they have access to."

Cox noted that as with any decision, weighing pros and cons is important. "For some families however, the necessity of getting back to work might make it very difficult to choose any other option than sending their children back to school," she said. "Lack of childcare and in-school options have really added to the financial hardship for many families. In addition, students have suffered from lack of routine, lack of stimulation, lack of peer interaction. Social isolation has a huge negative impact on the mental health of many. Parents feeling like they are in pressure cookers, juggling working from home, trying to help their children with home schooling and figure out how to navigate grocery shopping plus financial stress on top for many has not been good for most people's mental and physical health."

Cox said school boards are working closely with public health and will do their best to keep students as safe as possible.

"We know that students will quickly adapt to wearing masks and following new protocols," she said. "We also know that for some students they really feel like they need to be there, be with their friends, and that they learn better in a classroom setting. Lack of connectivity and social isolation for some has presented an uneven playing field for school."

"All factors to be considered but at the end of the day, we all have to do what we think is best with the information we have at the time," she said. "It doesn't mean we can't change our minds later or adapt."

For more information regarding re-registering for school and the information about a return-to-school plan thus far, visit: <https://tldsb.ca/return-to-school-re-registration/>.

For parents and caregivers interested in tips, support or help, Point in Time can be reached Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 705-457-5345.



Emma Gillam, a student at AETC works on a woodworking project outside of school during the coronavirus pandemic./Submitted



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Published by White Pine Media Corp

Funded by the Government of Canada | **Canada**

Monday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., Tuesday to Friday 9 a.m.- noon
Letters to the Editor must be signed and include phone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Email must include name and phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.
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Back-to-school choices

FIVE MONTHS into an unprecedented global pandemic, you have likely learned how to give a physically distanced hug – wrapping your arms around your own body, or putting your hand over your heart, perhaps while smiling from behind a mask. We've offered them to frontline health workers, delivery people, grocery store clerks, neighbours and, via Zoom and Google Classroom, to teachers pivoting to online classes in the spring. Now, as parents and caregivers make a decision this week about whether their children will physically go back to school in September, it's time to send some love and support their way.

Though schools have been closed since mid-March, when the coronavirus began spreading more significantly into Canada and forecasting suggested the pandemic would encounter a second wave in the fall, it was only July 30 that the provincial government announced its back-to-school plan, one that has been heavily criticized for disregarding current public health guidelines to prevent mass cases of COVID-19, as well as a report from SickKids that called for smaller classes in order to ensure physical distancing. The Trillium Lakelands District School Board held a meeting on Aug. 4 to go over plans in place for September, sending an email to parents on Aug. 7 regarding re-registration forms, which must be returned by Aug. 13. Parents are now deciding (see story beginning Page 3) whether their kids will return to school physically full-time, study through at-home remote learning or instead pursue a private option apart from the public school system. Whether or not their students will take the bus must also be decided.

In March, 1,550 students attended local schools. For some families, it's an

easy decision to attend – the numbers of COVID-19 cases in Haliburton County have been low, adults in the family must leave the house for work and don't have a childcare option, and students are facing mental health challenges from being isolated. For other families, it's an easy decision to not attend – someone in the household is vulnerable, opening social bubbles to other classmates and teachers might require less contact with grandparents, returning to school during a time of pandemic can result in mental health challenges for those returning to a "not business as usual" situation. And many families are dealing with the anxiety of not being able to make a decision at all, never mind so quickly, requiring more information about the plan for everything from what supplies students will have to bring since sharing will be avoided, to what the plan is if a student or teacher shows symptoms or worries their student will miss out on a part of the typical school year, or face the stress of an outbreak. (Archie Stouffer Elementary School is trying to answer some of the questions parents might have via their Facebook page).

As a community, we can offer support to keep our school community safe, and offer kind words and creative ideas for parents making tough decisions.

Regardless of what a parents' decision on school is, know that it's OK to be tired, you're not alone in feeling overwhelmed or anxious and it's OK to share that you're feeling vulnerable to access care and help from friends, family or counsellors and medical professionals. See our story in the *Times* today beginning on Page 13 about where you can turn if you or your family is in need of support in these exceptional times.



SUE TIFFIN
Reporter



Fun awaits on North Pigeon Lake

/DARREN LUM Staff

The working decoy

LAST WEEKEND, I took the time to organize my waterfowl decoys for the upcoming season. This two-hour long chore basically entails counting, assessing their condition, floating them and checking decoy lines and weights. That takes just about five minutes. The rest of the time is spent figuring out how you will rationalize getting a dozen more.

Not to brag but I happen to be an expert on decoys. I have carved them, hunted over them and gained enough proficiency to stuff 13 decoys in a bag that was only designed to fit 12. And one day, God willing, I hope to hone the skills required to get them out of that bag too.

I am also an expert in decoy acquisition. And I have discovered that the best way to get new working decoys is to give your spouse decorative ones for the house.

Perhaps I should explain terminology. A working decoy is an old weathered decoy that is used for hunting. A decorative decoy is an old weathered decoy that you put on a shelf in the house to spruce up the place. In my house, the term "place" loosely means my workshop, the shed or the laundry room.

But how does bringing your spouse decorative decoys relate to getting new working ones, you ask?

Well, the only real difference between a working decoy and a decorative decoy is a single pellet hole.

One pellet hole in a working decoy typically means it will sink faster than the Titanic during a half hour documentary. And if it sinks, it is, by definition, no longer working – which means it is purely decorative.

Sure, you could plug up the shot hole in the decoy with a matchstick and then use paraffin wax or some other type of sealer to repair it completely. But that would mean you would be eliminating your reason for buying another decoy. So get that thought out of your mind.

No, it is far better to repurpose that shot up working bird as a decorative decoy or if there are too many holes in it, turn it into a handheld sprinkler. This ensures that the decoy is now your spouse's problem and also opens up room in the roster for a new one.

Most people would call that a win-win.

So, as you can see, the decorative decoy plays a key role in keeping a hunter's decoy spread fresh and up to date. If not for them, we would all be shooting ducks over decoys that are older than our kids. And what fun would that be? Worse still, how would your shed look?

The biggest issue then is how to get those old decoys into the line of fire so they can spruce up your shed?

Well, I find that this can be achieved easily by auditioning several hunting partners and finally sticking with the one who can't resist shooting birds whose feet have just touched the water in the middle of the decoy spread. Then, when setting up your decoys for the hunt, set up all the ones you want to turn into decorative decoys in his shooting zone. There is no quicker way to rationalize getting a half dozen new decoys.

Needless to say, a hunting partner like this is worth his weight in gold. Heck, if he is a really good guy, you might even be able to convince him to purchase a couple of decorative decoys for his wife.



STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Mushrooms and dirty diapers

WHEN I WALK the woods these days I realize that I am seeing only a fraction what is here. The trees, the low-growing bushes and the animals all are obvious. I see the white birches, the maples, magnificent oaks and pines, as well as the ferns and blueberry bushes.

Sometimes a deer or a bear slips quickly and quietly in and out of my view. The insects are not nearly as shy and cautious. They are seen, heard, and felt.

It's easy to think of these abundant species of the plant and animal kingdoms as our entire world. They are only a part of it.



JIM POLING SR.
From Shaman's Rock

Unseen – actually hidden from us – are many thousands of species that are an important part of the forest. In fact, this forest would not exist without them.

These are the 144,000 of known species of organisms that make up nature's third kingdom – the kingdom of fungi. Some experts believe there may be as many as two to almost four million species of fungi.

Despite those huge numbers, fungi have not been given the same prominence and amount of study as plants and animals. Only now are we starting to understand the importance of fungi, and their possible help in solving the problems of our future.

My interest in fungi was limited to mushrooms, so prominent this month on the forest floor after the recent rains, or the brown fungus that sometimes forms on a toenail. Other commonly-known fungi are yeast, rust, mildew and mould.

That has changed since a friend gave me a fascinating new book titled *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our World, Change Our Minds and Shape Our Futures*. The author is British biologist-writer Merlin Sheldrake, a magical moniker for a magical subject.

It is a complex book, but fascinating and readable, with page after page packed with information about the importance of fungi. I finished reading it with a sense that study of the fungi kingdom has been neglected in favour of plants and animals research.

Yet it was fungi that helped plants to begin living on land millions of years ago.

Some biologists believe that 90 per cent of living plants have a life-giving relationship with fungal networks entangled in their roots.

It's a really cool relationship – tentacled fungi networks living deep in the dark soil help the tree to absorb moisture and minerals. In return, the tree collects sunlight, carbon dioxide and moisture from the open air to produce nutrients that it shares with fungi.

But most fascinating is the idea that fungi are not just the dumb and dirty little organisms that cannot communicate the way animals and some plants do. *Entangled Life* notes that some experts believe that fungal networks monitor large streams of data as part of their everyday existence.

Sheldrake speculates that if we were somehow able to tap into those fungal data streams we could learn more about the ecosystem, including soil quality, water purity and pollution.

We humans believe that a brain or mind is needed to have intelligence and cognition. Fungi do not have brains or minds but maybe they have other ways of gaining intelligence and knowledge and understanding – ways that we cannot see or understand.

Naturalist Charles Darwin, best known for his theory of evolution, wrote 150 years ago:

"Intelligence is based on how efficient a species becomes at doing the things they need to survive."

Fungi certainly have found some way of staying alive and helping plants and animals – we humans included – to do likewise.

Fungi are important to humans. They help to provide us food such as mushrooms, bread, cheese and, of course, beer. They are important in making life-saving medicines such as penicillin, and chemicals.

Some fungi have powerful appetites for pollutants. *Entangled Lives* notes they can consume cigarette butts, some herbicides, crude oil, some plastics and even baby diapers.

One research project showed that a certain fungus consumed 85 per cent of a mass of soiled diapers over two years. During the process, the fungus produced edible oyster mushrooms that had no trace of human disease.

Anything that can turn dirty diapers into delicious oyster mushrooms surely offers some good possibilities for cleaning up our increasingly polluted world.

Keto concerns

SO MANY PEOPLE are trying the keto diet. I have not been part of the cheering section for this diet or any diet that restricts the consumption of any real types of food (fruits, vegetables, legumes, etc.). The keto diet was originally a medical protocol used to help reduce epileptic seizures in children. It was never intended to be a diet. While people do lose weight on this diet the long-term effects are questionable.

Our bodies naturally use sugar (glucose) for energy. That sugar comes from carbohydrates (again – fruits, vegetables, legumes, etc.). On the keto diet the body is forced into ketosis and in that process the liver converts fat into ketones. The ketones are released into the bloodstream to provide the energy needed for the various functions of the body.

In order for the body to switch to ketosis, carbohydrate consumption must be reduced to 20 to 50 grams per day (a medium-sized banana has approximately 27 grams of carbs). It takes a few days of consuming minimal amounts of carbohydrates to reach a state of ketosis. Essentially, this weight loss method is forcing the body to use its back-up system for energy. Yes, we are built like that. We have all these systems in place to keep us alive in extreme circumstances. By reducing carbohydrates we're tricking our bodies into using an emergency method for fuel. It's like using a generator during a

power outage. It works fine for a bit but it's not as good as the real thing.

There are big risks involved, such as:

- Nutrient deficiency
- Liver problems
- Kidney problems
- Constipation
- Mood swings
- Confusion

The state of ketosis is meant to protect us when we're faced with starvation due to a food shortage. It's great to know that we could survive a short-term famine. That's one of the miracles of the human body. Playing around with that natural balance is asking for trouble. I appreciate that some folks love this diet. The challenge is that restrictive diets are hard to maintain for the long run. More often than not the weight comes back on. In addition to that, losing the weight again can be difficult be-

cause we've messed with a perfectly working system.

I know how hard it is to lose weight. I struggle with it daily. Personally, I would rather carry a few extra pounds than risk greater health issues involving my liver or kidneys.

Something to think about.

Laurie Sweig is a certified personal fitness trainer and spinning instructor. She owns and operates The Point for Fitness. She can be reached at laurie@thepointfitness.com.



LAURIE SWEIG
Practical Fitness

Jr. Book of the Month - August



The Runaway Princess by Johan Troianowski

Princesses don't run away to have their own adventures.

Princesses stay quietly and obediently at home, doing Princess things. They wouldn't dream of swimming with mermaids, or tromping through swamps, or hanging with pirates. Princesses are regal and proper. Adventuring just isn't for them ... Right?

Clearly you've never met Robin.

In this inventive and fantastical graphic novel, Princess Robin, bored with princess-ing all the time, embarks on the greatest adventure of her life – making friends of orphans and pirates and mermaids alike as she travels through the magical landscape of her kingdom. But her parents aren't so pleased. They're coming to find her and bring her back home, whether she wants to come or not! But Robin just might have other plans...

Bursting with colour and reader interaction, *The Runaway Princess* is available from Haliburton County Public Library. Come and check out Robin's adventure!



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
jenn@haliburtonpress.com



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TUESDAY AUGUST 25

Launch of Minden Pride Video - “Building Business with Pride”

Join us in a ZOOM
post launch chat, register at
curtaintalk@mindenpride.ca

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26

Launch of Minden Pride Video - “Our Community Speaks Out”

Join us in a ZOOM post launch chat,
register at
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THURSDAY AUGUST 27

Virtual Minden Pride Trivia Night

Time: 8-9:30pm. Preregister by noon at
trivianight@mindenpride.ca

FRIDAY AUGUST 28

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Time: 8-10pm. Door prizes for the
best costume. Register by noon at
COVIDparty@mindenpride.ca

SATURDAY AUGUST 29

Parade your PRIDE Colours

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Minden Pride’s 5th year and support
local businesses. Tag us with your fun
activity for a chance to win prizes.
Learn more at www.mindenpride.ca

SUNDAY AUGUST 30

Multi-faith Service

Time: 1pm. Led by Rev. Max Ward.
Register at
multifaith@mindenpride.ca

This project is funded in part by the Government
of Canada through the Federal Economic
Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Canada

Follow us for event details & information



Minden_Pride



Minden Pride



MindenPride

Gardener remembered as ‘vibrant,’ ‘authentic’

by SUE TIFFIN
Times Staff

The last time Jason Lindquist spoke to his wife Samantha was at 3:15 p.m. on Aug. 4. She was on her way home from Lindsay and was letting him know she had stopped to run into the Coboconk Foodland for a few groceries.

Samantha was going to pick up something for dinner, she told Jason, likely chicken. He told her by the time she got home, got cleaned up, and dinner was prepared, it would be 9 or 10 o'clock.

"No, she goes, I'm going to be home by 4 o'clock," recalled Jason. Then, "four o'clock rolled around, no word."

Jason said he wasn't concerned, that Samantha had a love for shopping and it wouldn't be uncommon for her to stop along the way home.

"That's common for her, she loved to on-line shop, she loved to shop stores too," he said. "I know Highway 35 has all those little antique shops, I just took it in my head, you know what, she's stopped and she's looking in these places."

At 5 o'clock, Jason sent a text asking Sam where she was. Fifteen minutes later, the police arrived at their home on Buckslide Road in Algonquin Highlands.

At around 3:40 p.m., Samantha had been in a two-vehicle collision on Highway 35 when a southbound car collided with her own northbound car near Cameron Road. Jason said police told him the oncoming car had crossed the line into Samantha's lane, and though she tried to avoid it, hitting the shoulder, the southbound car still collided with hers, killing her instantly. Jason's aunt,



Samantha Lindquist, 50, of Algonquin Highlands, died last week in a car accident on Highway 35. Friends and family describe her as being an authentic and joyful person. /Submitted photo

Doreen Trinkwon from Oshawa, a passenger in Samantha's car, was transported via Air Ornge ambulance to Sunnybrook hospital with serious injuries. Highway 35 was closed in the area for several hours as the OPP's technical collision investigation unit attended to assist with the investigation of the incident. The cause of the collision remains under investigation.

"Mindblowing," said Jason. "I couldn't even breathe. I couldn't even breathe, you know, it was just unreal. Unbelievable. You couldn't even believe it."

Samantha, who was 50 when she died last week, was stepmom to George and his wife Allie, and mom to Connor, Brandon and his

“

Sam brought so much energy and fun to work, so full of life and always with a smile on her face.

MEMORIAL POST BY
PINE REFLECTIONS
CO-WORKERS

”

partner Karly, 15-year-old Lily, and 11-year-old Jackson. She had two grandkids, Abigail and Emma.

"It's rough," said Jason. "My kids are stronger than me. But I don't believe that it's hit home yet for them. I sit here still myself and I don't believe it. You sit there and think she's going to walk in the door any minute."

Jason said his family experienced a huge outpouring of support when the community learned it was Samantha who had died in the accident. Besides managing Buckslide Tent and Trailer Park for almost two decades with Jason, who she met there 18 years ago when her parents owned the property, Samantha was a friendly face at Pine Reflections Gift Store and Garden Centre in Carnarvon.

"From the community, from the people in the park, from all walks of life," said Jason of the condolences, which even came from the Purolator delivery person. Samantha ran an online Etsy page with clients from around the world ordering jewelry and custom synthetic hair and wool dreadlocks from her, and if she wasn't ordering packages in, she was sending packages out.

"I don't know how he heard, but he came in on Friday with a package, and he knew about it, gave me his condolences," said Jason. "I jokingly said, don't worry bud, I'll be seeing you for at least a couple more months because I know there's more coming."

Jason said Samantha was creative, loved her flowers, and was passionate about riding a motorcycle.

He inhales before describing her: "Authentic, genuine, she wears her heart on her sleeve, caring, what you see is what you get, compassionate."

About 100 posts were quickly added to a memorial posting for Samantha on the Pine Reflections Gift Store and Garden Centre Facebook page. "Sam brought so much energy and fun to work, so full of life and always with a smile on her face," reads the original post. "She loved all living things and was so eager to help and share her knowledge with everyone she met."

Mourning friends, family and customers of the garden shop added that Samantha was sarcastic and witty, knowledgeable and full of joy, vibrant and energetic, many describing her as being a force. A post on her memorial page notes, "she could light up a room in 30 seconds."

"She probably wouldn't even realize how many people she touched," said Jason.

A GoFundMe account created for Samantha by her friend, Tracey Branker, has raised almost \$7,000 for the Lindquist family and can be visited at gofundme.com/f/samantha-lindquist-car-accident. Memorial donations in memory of Samantha can also be made to an education fund for Lily and Jackson through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0.

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SIRCH seeks to assist with area's food insecurity

by **DARREN LUM**
Times Staff

A new SIRCH Community Services research effort is hoping to gain a greater understanding of the community's need for food.

According to SIRCH, before COVID-19 13.5 per cent of households in the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit's jurisdiction experienced food insecurity.

That number is expected to rise because of the effects of the pandemic and SIRCH is conducting a survey it hopes will shed light on the food-related impacts of the pandemic for local residents and help to resolve food insecurity.

"We thought we had our hand on the pulse of the community when it came to food and needing food," SIRCH executive director Gena Roberston said in a press release. "Requests for our free meals had been steady at about 70 a week prior to COVID19. With the pandemic, the need increased to over 500 a week! Jay [McIvor] and his team were cooking five days a week just to keep up with demand.

When CERB [Canadian Emergency Response Benefit] came out and people started getting back to work, we expected demand to drop – but it didn't. Conversations and stories made us realize that for many the needs had been there all along, but they just hadn't been aware of the meals. So we wanted to dig a bit deeper."

Emma Wood, who joined SIRCH this past summer because of a grant, is conducting the survey and is welcoming input from local organizations and residents.

"We are connecting with local food banks, community organizations, and residents to collect information and experiences on the impact of the pandemic as it relates to their ability to purchase nutritious food," Wood said. "We're also asking some additional questions to try to gather information that might be helpful in creating solutions to food insecurity in our county. Already we have made valuable and meaningful connections in the community, and the research being done will have a greater impact on Haliburton County," she said in a press release.

Wood has Bachelor of Arts in international development studies, and is in the certificate program at The Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University.

“

With the pandemic, the need increased to over 500 [free meals] a week.

— SIRCH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GENA ROBERTSON

”



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Online surveys are available to the public. Surveys are confidential, and names and identifying information will not be given out.

SIRCH provides three ways to complete the survey. One, online at their website (www.sirch.on.ca) by clicking the tab "COVID-19" and then click on the survey link. Two, phone Emma Wood from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday at (705) 457-1742. Three, email emma_wood@sirch.on.ca and a link will be emailed to complete the survey online.

Wood has reached out to local organizations such as food banks and community kitchens for feedback.

In Minden, the community kitchen manager Marilynne Lesperance had consulted with the Minden Food Bank manager Joanne Barnes and said CERB has greatly affected who they have seen come to them for help the past few months during the pandemic.

"Our experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic have been completely different than what we are accustomed to any other time in our history. It would not be right at this time to provide all the information that is asked for because the numbers would be skewed because of the situation we are in," she said in a prepared statement. "We are giving out much more food right now but we are seeing people that are disadvantaged by COVID-19, not all of our regular clientele. CERB has had a huge impact on our day to day operation because many people have qualified for this government benefit and do not have to come to the food bank."

Lesperance said a more accurate picture will be available later in the year when CERB ends and the summer is over.

"We believe there is going to be greater need at that time because we always see more people when the kids go back to school, when the golf courses close and the resorts and camps are empty. When you take into account the amount of small businesses that aren't going to make it we expect to see even more people at that time and we are currently buying food in preparation for this influx," she wrote.

She expects a higher demand at the food bank because of the return of regular clients and a continuation of the recently acquired clients.

She appreciated the sentiment behind this effort, but wasn't ready to give information that may not provide an accurate portrayal of what's happening.

"We do want our community to know about food insecurity in our community but to quote our service numbers at this time would be incorrect going forward," she wrote.

Tina Jackson of the Central Network said Wood has had discussions with both of the food bank managers in Wilberforce and Cardiff regarding what they are seeing first-hand at the food banks.

"Certainly, efforts to shed light on local food insecurity issues are welcomed, particularly if the information can be used by the community to help better understand and document both the impact of the pandemic and the subsequent responses. It is our position that any such research or evaluation project be developed in partnership or at least in collaboration with the Haliburton County Food Net committee of which we are a part. That committee, made up of local agencies, works to coordinate efforts related to food security and collectively address any gaps in service," she wrote in an email.



Hazardous waste day

A vehicle stops for a stop sign, turning onto Bobcaygeon Road from Scotch Line on the morning of Aug. 8. The closure was due to a hazardous waste event held from 8 a.m. to 11:30 at the Scotch Line landfill. As part of measures to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, drivers were not permitted to leave their vehicles. Contents were removed by landfill staff and organized for transport. There are two more hazardous waste events at the Scotch Line landfill on Saturday, Sept. 5 and Saturday Oct. 10. In total, there are five hazardous waste events held at Scotch Line landfill between June and October. /Staff

Summer speaker on Zoom Aug. 13

Environment Haliburton! will present a virtual Summer Speaker event on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 7 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the risks associated with our increasing dependence on global supply chains for everything from essential personal protective equipment to critical food supplies. The shutting down of large segments of the economy has also pushed many small, local businesses to the brink of bankruptcy.

Are there other ways to organize our economy to reduce future vulnerabilities to pandemics and other disruptions while building local economies that privilege social and environmental values as much, if not more, than profit?

Our 2020 (Virtual) Summer Speaker event is meant to help start a conversation in Haliburton County about building a more resilient, ecologically-conscious, post-pandemic economy that works for everyone, not just Amazon.

Please join us on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 7 p.m. for a Zoom presentation by Russ Christianson, a well-respected cooperative developer from Campbellford, Ont., who has helped launch more than 200 co-operatives, with a 70 per cent success rate.

Russ not only talks the talk, but has a history direct local involvement in his own community, serving as the founding president of the Campbellford/Seymour



Russ Christianson, a well-respected cooperative developer from Campbellford, Ont.

Community Foundation and the Aron Theatre Co-operative.

Please register for this event on the EH! website at www.environmenthaliburton.org.

*Submitted by
Environment Haliburton*



Updated: Aug. 10, 2020 – 2:15 pm

This is the cumulative data on confirmed COVID-19 cases in the HKPR District Health Unit area.

	Haliburton	City of Kawartha Lakes	Northumberland	HKPRDHU
Confirmed Cases	15	177	26	218
Current Probable Cases+	0	1	0	1
Current High Risk Contacts+	8	7	5	20
Hospitalizations (Total to Date)	1	11	2	14
Resolved**	12	156	25	193
Deaths	0	32	0	32
Current Outbreaks	0	0	0	0

COVID-19 cumulative data

As of Aug. 10, there are three confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County, and eight current high-risk contacts. High-risk contacts are defined as asymptomatic individuals who are known to have been in contact with a confirmed or probable case. This information is updated on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, excluding holidays by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit. Positive COVID-19 tests conducted in Haliburton County on residents with a primary address outside of Haliburton County are recorded in the health unit of that address. /Screenshot from the HKPR District Health Unit website at hkpr.on.ca.

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John Howard Society offers new employment tool

by **CHAD INGRAM**
Times Staff

The John Howard Society has created a new online tool that helps those with a police

record navigate the search for employment and the interview process. Even in the best of economic times, the search for a job can be challenging for those with criminal records. Jacqueline Tasca, director of partnerships and strategic initia-

tives for the John Howard Society of Ontario, points out that the COVID-19 pandemic has made that search for work even more competitive, and that broaching the subject of a criminal record with potential employers can be a very intimidating experience for those seeking work. “Our tool is there to really help people anticipate the questions they might get asked,” Tasca says. “The job-seeking situation is often a time fraught with anxiety, stress and shame.” The online tool, which is essentially an e-learning course, allows job-seekers to understand the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing a criminal record; legal rights regarding criminal background checks; and tips and techniques for how to effectively disclose a criminal record. Tasca says that recent research has shown that more and more Canadian employers are asking for criminal record checks as part of the hiring process, with as many as half now requesting the documents, for positions ranging from entry-level to high-ranking. “This is becoming an increasingly common HR practice,” she says. “Having a criminal record is actually very common,” Tasca continues, adding that ac-

cording to surveys undertaken by the John Howard Society, one in 17 Canadians has some form of criminal record. Robert Gaudette, manager of skills development for the John Howard Society Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton, says that a criminal record is often part of a set of complex barriers to employment for people, and the new online tool can be helpful in overcoming the social stigma and self-stigma often accompanied by having a criminal record, leaving job-seekers feeling a lot more confident about their prospects, and themselves. “We are well-versed and can make referrals to other agencies in the community,” Gaudette says, some of those agencies including Victoria County Career Services in Lindsay and the Fleming CREW Employment Centre in Haliburton. The John Howard Society offers a number of free training programs, covering everything from literacy to numeracy to coding and computer skills to resume-writing, and Gaudette points out the programming is available to the community at large, not just those with criminal records. The society’s new online tool can be found at <https://policerecordhub.ca/arrest-disclosure/>



PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills proposes to consider by-laws to stop up, close, and convey those parcels of land more particularly described as follows:

- File No. PLSRA2019019:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Gull Lake, lying in front of Lot 2, Concession 1, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, designated as Part 1, on a Plan of Survey 19R-10381, registered June 3, 2020.
- File No. PLSRA2019036:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Mountain Lake, lying in front of Lot 7, Concession 6, Geographic Township of Minden, designated as Part 1, on a Plan of Survey 19R-10380, registered June 3, 2020.
- File No. PLSRA2019050:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Gull Lake, lying in front of Lot 18, Concession 10, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, designated as Part 1, on a Plan of Survey 19R-10384, registered June 10, 2020.

The above noted plans of surveys are available for inspection and additional information may be obtained by contacting the undersigned at 705-286-1260 (x206) or by e-mail at iclending@mindenhills.ca.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that the proposed by-Laws will come before the said Council for consideration, and if deemed advisable for passing, at its regular meeting being held as an Electronic Meeting, on **Thursday, August 27, 2020** at the hour of 9:00 AM. At that time, Council will hear in person or by their counsel, solicitor, or agent, any person who claims that their land will be prejudicially affected and who applies in advance to be heard.

DATED AT THE Township of Minden Hills, this August 13, 2020
Ian Clending, MPI., Planner

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Answers on page 13

Health unit retracts second COVID-19 hospitalization report

A report of a second hospitalization related to COVID-19 – the first since April – released on Aug. 5 was retracted on Aug. 7 in the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit’s data update. On Aug. 5 at 12:25 p.m., the health unit updated cumulative data on confirmed COVID-19 cases in the region that included a second hospitalization, the county’s first hospitalization since April. On Aug. 7 at 12:45 p.m., that information was corrected in the health unit’s report, noting “One case has been removed, as the case was not hospitalized for COVID-19 treatment.” Bill Eekhof, spokesperson for the health unit, reached out to the Echo to “clarify this situation.” “...the health unit was notified of a positive lab result for an individual in hospital in Haliburton County. However, upon further investigation and follow-up, the confirmed case no longer meets the criteria for a ‘hospitalized case of COVID-19.’ This is now reflected in today’s COVID-19 case count for the health unit region,” he wrote in an email. “The Health Unit defines COVID hospitalizations this way: “If a local resident goes to hospital for COVID-19 symptoms in Haliburton County, Northumberland County or the City of Kawartha Lakes, he/she is included in the hospitalized case count for the HKPR region. This remains the same, even if the person is transferred to another hospital in a different part of Ontario. “If someone goes to hospital for a medical problem unrelated to COVID-19, and is then tested and found to have the coronavirus, they are not counted among hospitalized cases but are included in the confirmed case counts for COVID-19.” Currently there are three Haliburton County residents who have tested positive for COVID-19, with 12 previous cases reported to be resolved. Three high-risk contacts – those being asymptomatic individuals who are known to have been in contact with a confirmed or probable case – were reported on Aug. 5, updated to seven high-risk con-

tacts on Aug. 7 and then eight on Aug. 10. The health unit will not give further details about the age or gender of those who have tested positive for COVID-19, nor did they respond to questions for further details on where the second hospitalization took place. “Unfortunately, the HKPR District Health Unit cannot provide more details about the latest COVID-19 case in Haliburton County,” said Eekhof. “We have a legal responsibility to protect personal health information that we collect under various pieces of legislation such as the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Although it may seem that our geographic area has a large enough population to make it impossible to identify an individual, we essentially cover three counties comprised of small towns and villages... and it could be very easy to identify someone who tests positive. This is especially true in Haliburton County, which is the smallest of the three municipalities serviced by the Health Unit.” The health unit will also not confirm if the confirmed cases are connected to each other. While an epidemiological report offers the distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases by age and gender throughout the health unit’s region, the health unit will not break down the local cases. Throughout the region, a little more than 21 per cent of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 are 80 and older, 12 per cent are aged 70 to 79, almost 20 per cent are aged 60 to 69, almost 18 per cent are aged 50 to 59, nine per cent are 40 to 49, and also 30 to 39, seven per cent are 20 to 29 and just under four per cent are aged 20 and under. City of Kawartha Lakes has reported 177 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 11 hospitalizations in total and 156 cases resolved, while Northumberland has reported 26 cases of COVID-19, with two hospitalizations in total and 25 cases resolved. The region has seen 218 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since reporting began in March. For further information including a daily epidemiological summary, visit hkpr.on.ca.

~ Staff

Pandemic puts pressure on mental health

by JENN WATT
Editor

The coronavirus pandemic has changed nearly every facet of our daily lives, disrupting routines and limiting contact with loved ones, introducing financial pressures and heightening anxiety about our health and that of others.

Mental health professionals serving the Haliburton Highlands say they've seen an increase in visits and that clients are feeling the weight of five months of COVID-19 pressure – but also that there are effective techniques and community supports that can help.

"The volume of inquiries has definitely increased since May after dropping off dramatically in March and April," said Rebecca Brownell, a registered marriage and family therapist and registered psychotherapist with an office at the Colborne Street Clinic in Orillia. "...I think there are many couples struggling with having to manage parenting at home all day together, figuring out a new routine re: childcare and the management of household tasks; creating healthy boundaries around working from home and managing stress. ... Suddenly people's routines have been thrown off."

Alone time has suffered, she said, with adults working from home together or potentially staying home if they've lost their jobs due to the economic downturn.

"Many are reporting missing going out to work and missing the social interactions with their co-workers. Many derive a sense of purpose and competence from their work and enjoy getting positive feedback from colleagues. Many are missing the banter around the water cooler!" she said.

Private clinician and registered social service worker Nancy Brownsberger, who offers non-therapeutic based support and counselling through Grow Optimism, also saw numbers drop when the pandemic first arrived.

"Initially, my practice became very quiet," she said, "As did the world. As we all took a respective knee to the virus, I believe that most of us recoiled in absolute shock and disbelief as well as fear. I know I certainly did. About a month into the shut-down I began to receive requests for mental health support from individuals who found they were struggling with navigating the current world and their new realities."

A global pandemic is something most alive today have never lived through before, and the reality of the health threats and the necessary precautions to be taken naturally lead to uncertainty and sometimes to fear.

"The term 'unprecedented times' is almost an understatement to the realities that we faced individually and on a global scale," Brownsberger said. "A virus, that is highly contagious, with no known cure, is sweeping the globe and has the possibility of killing us in an extremely terrifying way – namely, alone, in a hospital, on a ventilator."

Nicole Mee, a registered psychotherapist who runs Forest Lane Counselling, said combining the realities of the pandemic with life events can intensify issues.

"The stressors may have always been there, but the pandemic has amplified it for some. For others it is mainly related to societal norms and changes in routine. I think as a whole society we are seeing an ever-changing and fast-moving shift in the way we operate. People do not always adapt well to change in 'normal times' but when it is at a global

level and happens rapidly it can create high anxiety and stress for people."

The stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic can also aggravate pre-existing mental health conditions, leading to increased anxiety and depression in some.

"People with histories of trauma are especially vulnerable to this kind of stress as it is reminiscent of a time in their lives when they didn't feel safe and secure and did not have a sense of certainty about their future," Brownell explained. "People who have a history of depression and anxiety are also more vulnerable as the brain attempts to deal with a new stressor and uncertainty. I have noticed that there is an increase in prescribed medications such as benzodiazepines for anxiety and antidepressants for depression."

Brownell said that isolation is especially hard on one's mental health: "Many are feeling lonely and disconnected. We are social beings, craving and needing touch and closeness. Teens are struggling immensely with a disconnect from friends. And many adults have not been able to hold their elderly parents in nursing homes. This has been devastating to many of my clients."

Brownsberger pointed out that while for some, the pandem-

see COVID-19 page 14



Rebecca Brownell is a registered marriage and family therapist and a registered psychotherapist who has been in practice for 27 years. Her office is in the Colborne Street Clinic in Orillia. /Photo submitted

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COVID-19 may worsen existing mental health conditions

from page 13

ic has brought people together to get through a difficult time, not everyone was surrounded by supportive family and friends – physically or virtually.

“[D]uring the first two months of the virus, there was a meme on social media that went something like this ‘we may all be in the same storm, but we are not in the same boat’. To me, this was a perfect example of individual experience – meaning, if you have mental illness or susceptibility to feeling anxious or depressed, your boat might more easily fill with water and tip over,” she said. “And that is where, I believe, we began to hear and see divisiveness, comparative suffering.”

Brownsberger said she worries that when people are afraid, there can be an impulse to label fellow humans as “the other,” leading to anger, divisiveness and sometimes hate.

“And when we are in a state of fear or anxiety, with little ability to address it or find strategies to cope with it in a healthy way, it can affect our central nervous systems and increase our likelihood for an increase in pre-

viously diagnosed mental illness symptoms like anxiety (fear of what might happen or lack of control about what is happening), depression (feelings of sadness, grief and loss about what is happening),” she said.

Finding hope and help

One strategy to cope when the world is filled with uncertainty and conflict is to focus on the joys in one’s life. Mee said she works with clients to look for silver linings such as having more time with family, returning to a favourite hobby, or the chance to adopt a slower pace.

“Self-care is something that I focus on,” Mee said. “We need to take care of ourselves and our minds before we can tackle more difficult situations. A question I often ask is, ‘What do you do for you that brings you joy?’” That may be talking to friends on the phone, playing cards with a family member, or listening to music, for example.

Her suggestions for those finding the pandemic overwhelming: take breaks from social media and news if it’s creating anxiety, worry, anger and frustration; find a hobby to

keep busy that brings you joy; take care of your body by getting plenty of sleep, eating healthful foods, practising mindfulness, and doing stretches or other exercises; getting outside; and staying connected with friends and family.

Brownell also advocates taking breaks from overly intense news stories. “The part of our brain that alerts us to dangers is called the amygdala. When we listen to the news our amygdalas are alerted to danger in our lives and increase anxiety and a sense of not being safe. This puts our brains in a fight or flight response and a hyper-aroused state making it difficult to relax and have a positive mindset.”

Establishing a plan and creating new routines in your life can help, “like getting up at the same time of day, having family meals together, having a game night, having evening walks together, or just debriefing the day in a hot tub!” she said.

Being able to vent your frustrations and to vocalize how you’re feeling can help to put

see page 15



Nicole Mee has been a registered psychotherapist for nine years, working in children’s mental health in the Halton/Peel area before moving to Haliburton. Her practice, Forest Lane Counselling, was established in 2019. /Photo submitted

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Local resources available for help

from page 14

things in perspective. Brownsberger said sometimes having a conversation with a health professional can bring clarity.

"Having the opportunity to speak with a mental health professional, social worker, psychologist, therapist, psychiatrist, counsellor, spiritual advisor during times of stress allows us to vocalize some of these unhelpful thoughts and mistaken beliefs, and begin to unravel them which allows us to gain clarity during difficult times in our lives," she said.

Being compassionate and kind is also of utmost importance not just for one's personal mental state, but to create a community environment that fosters cohesion and well-being.

"What we don't need in the midst of struggle (remembering that we are all struggling) is to be shamed, blamed or judged for our actions. And we are

all 100 per cent responsible for how we choose to behave," Brownsberger said. "I have said it so many times, to so many clients and groups over the past four months – ask yourself this 'how do I choose to show up to this and how do I want to be remembered for those choices?'"

She said people should reach out when they need help, but also that friends should "reach in" when they see someone struggling: "And when we reach in, with compassion, kindness and a little fear of having a difficult conversation, we can encourage them to get the help they might need to assist them with their current struggles."

Seeking professional help

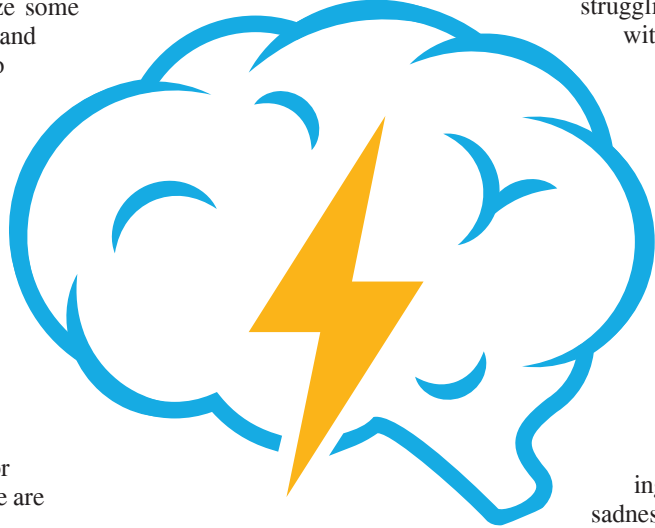
You may need to seek help from a mental health professional when you no longer feel that you are coping or managing well, Mee said. "I recommend this when feelings of being overwhelmed, sadness or heightened anxiety make

it difficult for them to enjoy the things they used to enjoy in life. In addition, I also recommend this, when someone just wants a safe, non-judgemental, confidential space to talk about what is going on in his or her world. Sometimes just talking to a caring professional can be exactly what you need to work through the thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing," she said.

If you are having suicidal thoughts, it's important to get in touch with your health-care provider immediately.

Resources that can help

- Mental Health Services - Haliburton Highlands Health Services 705-286-4575
- Four County Crisis - 1-866-995-9933 (24-hour free crisis support)
- haliburtoncares.ca - a website offering help during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Families 705-457-5345 (after hours crisis: 1-866-995-9933)
- Local food banks and SIRCH Community Services free meals
- Private mental health practitioners and psychiatric supports - speak with your primary care physician



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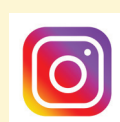
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In Loving Memory of
William Richard Milford (Bill)
Passed away after a lengthy illness, at Bloomington Cove Nursing Home Stouffville, Ontario on Sunday, August 9th, 2020, at the age of 95.


Beloved husband of Betty (nee Klinck - deceased). Dear father of Dan (Sharon), Larry (Mary), Brenda (Rob Glendenning), and Randy (Jen). Fun-loving Grandad to Stacy, Ryan, Trevor, Julie, Tyler, Brandon, Shannon, Kevin, Shelby, Ashley, and Mitch. Great grandfather of 8 (Claudia, Caelan, Arthur, Kallen, Declan, Audrey, Gwen, and Harvey). Brother of Art, predeceased by his siblings Harry, Dot, Ethel, Mary, and Harry. Fondly remembered by his nieces and nephews for all of the good family times shared with him. Bill was in the Canadian Parachute Corps in WW2, was a 40 year employee of Bell Canada, and an avid curler with the Avonlea and Minden Curling Clubs. He was a man of strong ethics with a love for his family and the outdoors.

A Private funeral and graveside service will be held for the immediate family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario with interment at the Minden Cemetery. Friends and family will be invited to a celebration of Bill's life to be held at a later date in 2021.

Thank you to the caring staff at Bloomington Cove for looking after Dad and making him comfortable for his last few years. Memorial Donations to the Alzheimer Society of Canada would be appreciated by the family.



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Contract signed

Finally.

After years of waiting the, approval for the construction of the health facilities in Minden and Haliburton has been received from the Ministry of Health.

Victoria-Haliburton MPP Chris Hodgson delivered the long-anticipated news, Saturday evening, before a full house, at the Health Services Foundation Mid-Summer Gala at PineStone Resort. "This is a great day for the Haliburton Highlands," the MPP said as he read the letter from the Minister of Health Elizabeth Witmer.

The MPP had more good news, telling the audience that the Ministry of Health will cover \$3.9 million in additional expenses for the project, which means the community share drops to \$5.5 million. "With approximately \$1.5 million already collected, the local fund-raising effort is now \$4 million and that is achievable," he told the ecstatic crowd.

Health Services Board Chair, Hugh Nichol, thanked the MPP for the good news. He expressed his appreciation to the health services board members, past and present. "There are some who may have thought we would not have

reached this point, but with hard work and dedication on the part of the board and staff we forged ahead...and now we're going to do it!" He told the gathering.

Nichol had particular praise for the role played by MPP Hodgson. "Without his work we would not have come this far," Nichol said. "Our communities owe you a great debt of gratitude."

Following the presentations Nichol and executive director Foster Loucks signed the contract between the board and the general contractor, to seal the agreement. Construction is scheduled to begin on September 14 at both Minden and Haliburton locations. (See page 2 for computer renderings of the new health facilities.)

An evening of dancing, celebration and fund-raising followed, with auctions and the selection of the raffle winners. Al Lalonde of Unionville was the winner of the diamond necklace donated by Bill and Sandy Valentine. (Ticket sold by Lee Oster). Winner of the Bateman print was Dale Walker of Haliburton while Wendy Bolt of Waterloo won the Highlands Resorts entertainment package.



While Haliburton County Warden, Murray Fearrey, and Victoria-Haliburton MPP, Chris Hodgson, look on, Health Services executive director Foster Loucks and board chair, Hugh Nichol, sign the contract for the construction of new health facilities in Minden and Haliburton.

Little support for zoning changes

by Jerry Grozelle

Minden's downtown merchants made it clear they don't agree with the proposal to allow all forms of retail businesses to locate along the Highway 35 corridor.

The council of Anson, Hindon and Minden has proposed amending the Official Plan to allow any sized retail establishment along Highway 35. The current by-law allows retail businesses of 6,000 square feet or more. There are a few existing businesses which do not conform to that regulation.

The municipality held a meeting Thursday evening before the regular council meeting to hear the opinions of anyone who cared to comment on the proposed amendments to the Official Plan.

The majority of those present spoke in opposition to the proposal, with the general consensus being that allowing

virtually any type of business to operate along the highway would have a detrimental effect on the downtown businesses and the character of Minden's downtown area.

Anson, Hindon and Minden Reeve Jeanne Anthon began the meeting by outlining the reasoning behind the proposed amendment. She told the audience of about 25 people that the issue was a critical one that deserved effective dialogue. She added that the issue has been debated for many years, without much in the way of change until two years ago, "when council wanted to explore economic opportunities and development for our community in the face of local economic hardships, including difficulties facing our downtown businesses."

Bob Lehman, a planner from Barrie, strongly recommended opening the Minden by-pass to retail uses, supporting his recommendation with examples

based on similar situations in other communities across Ontario. Lehman's recommendation was rejected at that time, but the fact that the downtown area was not able to accommodate large operations, those over 6,000 square feet, was recognized. With that in mind, council passed a zoning change that would allow retail operations of 6,000 square feet or more within the highway commercial designation. That amendment was passed in 1997, without any objections.

"The issue won't go away," Anthon said. "She added that the pressure continues to allow less restrictive retail uses on the Minden by-pass, following trends in other communities, which indicate that Minden may miss some opportunities if council doesn't act."

"The Chamber of Commerce indicates there has been recent interest in development for our by-pass," Anthon

said. "we are asking the community -- do you want council to reject economic opportunities, jobs, services, etc, because they want to have the Highway 35 exposure?"

"We have done our homework around planning issues. Council felt it was time to go to the public and open effective communication and dialogue with the stakeholders of our commu-

(more on page 3)

**Look for us on
Tuesday next week**

Due to the Labour Day holiday Monday, the next edition of *The Times* will be published on Tuesday, September 8. Subscriptions will be mailed on that date and *The Times* will be available in retail outlets. Have a safe and enjoyable long weekend.

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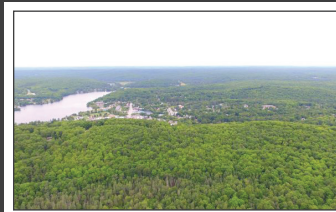
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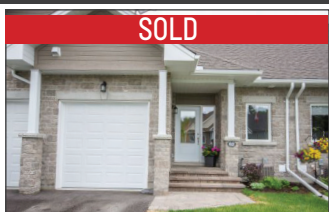
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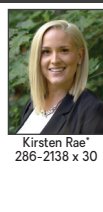
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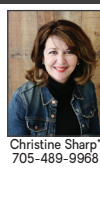
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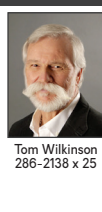
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